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INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification 5 : C07K 3/24, 15/06, A61K 37/36 — A1

(11) International Publication Number: WO 94/10192

(43) International Publication Date: 11 May 1994 (11.05.94)

(21) International Application Number: PCT/SE93/00885

(22) International Filing Date: 27 October 1993 (27.10.93)

(30) Priority data:
9203175-6 28 October 1992 (28.10.92) SE
9302278-8 2 July 1993 (02.07.93) SE

(71) Applicant *(for all designated States except US)*: KABI PHARMACIA AB [SE/SE]; S-751 82 Uppsala (SE).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants *(for US only)* : FLORIN-ROBERTSSON, Ebba [SE/SE]; Norrtullsgatan 12 E, S-113 27 Stockholm (SE). HÖKBY, Elvy [SE/SE]; Sicklingsvägen 6, S-122 46 Enskede (SE). LUNDIN, Ronny [SE/SE]; Lobovägen 3, S-178 32 Ekerö (SE). THOMÉ, Sirkka [SE/SE]; Rindögatan 15, 11, S-115 36 Stockholm (SE). WESTIN-SJÖDAHL, Gertrud [SE/SE]; Älpvägen 22, S-152 57 Södertälje (SE).

(74) Agents: TANNERFELDT, Agneta et al.; Kabi Pharmacia AB, S-112 87 Stockholm (SE).

(81) Designated States: AU, CA, FI, JP, NO, US, European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE).

Published
With international search report.

(54) Title: PROCESS FOR MANUFACTURING CRYSTALS OF GROWTH HORMONE AND CRYSTALS THEREBY OBTAINED

(57) Abstract

The invention relates to a process for manufacturing crystals of growth hormone (GH) or functional derivatives thereof characterised by the steps: (i) mixing GH or functional derivatives thereof with an aqueous solution comprising a buffer and a chemical compound with the general formula (I): Ar-[-CR_1R_2-]$_n$-[-CR_3R_4-]$_m$-CR_5R_6-OH in which Ar is phenyl, alkyl-substituted phenyl, naphthyl, alkyl-substituted naphthyl, R_1 to R_6 is H, OH or alkyl and n and m is 0 or 1; (ii) incubating; (iii) isolating the crystals by known methods. It also relates to the use of the chemical compound with general formula (I) in the preparation of crystals of GH from a buffert solution, crystals of growth hormone or any functional analogue thereof in the form of needles, trigonal forms, cubes or parallelepipeds with a length of at least 20 microns, and suspension for injection, depot formulation and dry formulation comprising the crystals.

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PROCESS FOR MANUFACTURING CRYSTALS OF GROWTH HORMONE AND CRYSTALS THEREBY OBTAINED

The present invention relates to a process for manufacturing crystals of growth hormone (GH) or functional derivatives thereof. It also relates to crystals of growth hormone and compositions containing them.

Growth hormone can be both human and animal such as human growth hormone (hGH), bovine growth hormone (bGH), fish and porcine growth hormone (pGH).

hGH is a protein consisting of a single chain of 191 amino acids. The molecule is cross-linked by two disulphide bridges and the monomeric form has a molecular weight of 22 kDa. However, pituitary human growth hormone is not homogeneous. For example, a smaller 20 kDa hGH variant produced from the same gene is also known. The "basic hGH" variant (hGH-V) expressed by the placenta during pregnancy is another analogue which is a product of a separate gene. Like the 22 kDa hGH it consists of 191 amino acids but in various positions throughout the molecule 13 of them are different. See e.g. Bewley TA et al; Adv Enzymol; 42; 73-166; 1975 and Frankenne F et al; J Clin. Endocrin and Metabol; 66; 1171-80; 1988.

Recombinant hGH (22 kDa) has been commercially available for several years. It is preferred over the pituitary derived products because the product prepared from human tissue might contain infectious agents such as that for the Creutzfeldt-Jacob's disease. Two types of therapeutically useful recombinant hGH preparations are present on the market: the authentic one, e.g. Genotropin®, Kabi Pharmacia AB, and an analogue with an additional methionine residue at the N-terminal end, e.g. Somatonorm®.

hGH is used to stimulate linear growth in patients with hypopituitary dwarfism or Turner's syndrome but other indications have also been suggested.

The stability of proteins is generally a problem in pharmaceutical industry.

It has often been solved by drying the protein in different drying processes, such as freeze-drying. The protein has thereafter been distributed and stored in dried form. The patient necessarily has to reconstitute the dried protein in a solvent before use, which is a disadvantage and of course is an inconvenience for the patient.

The freeze-drying process is a costly and time consuming process step, and it would be of great advantage if this step could be avoided, when preparing a commercial product of a protein.

For a patient, who needs daily injections of a growth hormone e.g. hGH, and especially when the patient is a child, it is of importance that the product is easy to handle, to dose and inject. The reconstitution of freeze-dried hGH demands prudence and carefulness and should preferably be avoided, but is the only method available today.

Different solutions to this problem have been disclosed, but until now no product has appeared on the market.

In WO 89/09614, Genentech, a stabilised formulation of hGH comprising glycine, mannitol and a buffer is disclosed and in a preferred embodiment a non-ionic surfactant such as polysorbate 80 is added. Sodium-phosphate is suggested as buffer substance. The formulation has an increased stability in a lyophilised formulation and upon reconstitution.

Another possibility of administering growth hormone in a solution is to add a block copolymer containing polyoxyethylene-polyoxypropylene according to EP 211 601, International Minerals and

Chemical Corporation. This solution provides for a prolonged release upon administration to the animal.

A different way to circumvent the stability and production problems of GH is presented in this patent application.
By crystallisation a new way of manufacturing growth hormone can be achieved.
Crystals of growth hormone can also be used for various new formulations of the hormone like e.g. injectable suspensions, implants and topical formulations of various types.

Crystallisation of growth hormone has not previous been possible to perform in an industrial way.
Clarkson et al reports in J Mol Biol (1989), 208, 719-721 of three distinct crystallisation methods, different from the earlier described.
The following methods were used:
1. Hanging drop and using ethanol or methanol in the buffer in which tetragonal bipyramids were obtained with a size of 10^{-3} mm^3, and a celldimension of 134 Å (0, 0134 micron) after up to a year.
2. Hanging drop, using acetone in the buffer in which trigonal prisms were obtained with a size of $2x10^{-3}$ mm^3 after 3 to 14 days.
3. Batch wise using paraldehyde and obtaining orthorhombic parallelepipeds with a size of $2x10^{-3}$ mm^3 after several weeks.
The authors commented that they did not succeed in obtaining large single crystals.

In WO 92/00998, Novo Nordiska A/S, a method of producing chemically stable and biological active growth hormone cation crystals are disclosed. The method comprises the steps: addition of cations to a solution of GH at a pH between 5 and 8, growing of crystals at a temperature of 0-30 °C and isolation of the crystal. The crystal obtained is a cation GH crystal.
The preferred cation is Zn^{2+} and preferably an organic solvent is added together with the cation.

The obtained crystals always include a cation and are small. In the examples the length of the zinc containing crystals varies between 3 and 12 micron.

In an article by B C Cunningham et al in Science, Vol 253, 545-548, 1991, dimerization of hGH by zinc in disclosed.

There is a demand on the market for better ways of administering hGH. Some ways to meet this demand is to provide either ready to use injection solutions or to provide an injectable depot formulation e.g. as suspended crystals of hGH.

Crystals of hGH can be used in a suspension or in an aqueous injectable solution together with buffers and with or without preservatives.
They can also be used in depot formulation, as e.g. an oily or aquoeos suspension or as an implant, and thus give a slow release of the medicament.

If the crystals are large enough they can be used as powder and be spread on a surface, e.g. on a wound. Too small particles are not suitable as they form dust and cannot be used for direct use.

We have to our great surprise found a new method for producing pure, active GH crystals without the addition of cations or solvents such as methanol, ethanol, acetone or paraldehyde, which are not acceptable from therapeutic view.
By this new method the crystals could be formed within a very short time. When using some of the named compounds, see example 22, the crystals were formed instantly and for some others within one hour. This can be compared with the method presented by Carlsson et al. which only produces crystals after several weeks.
By the addition of a chemical compound with the general structure (I) to an aqueous solution of GH, crystals of GH can easily and rapidly be formed. The addition can preferably be performed in the last purification step by dialysis or chromatography with the solution containing the compound.

With this method it is possible to vary the size of the crystals depending on the conditions and time, which is a great advantage when preparing different formulations for administration of hGH.

The obtained GH in crystals is a material normally containing over 80 % monomeric GH.

It could be a great advantage in the manufacturing of hGH, that there is a quick method for preparing crystals and with avoidance of cations.
This method can also be used in the technical process for purification and manufacturing.

The new process for manufacturing crystals of growth hormone (GH) or functional derivatives thereof thus includes the steps:
i) mixing GH or functional derivatives thereof with an aqueous solution comprising a buffer and a chemical compound with the general formula (I):

$$Ar - [- CR_1R_2 -]_n - [- C\ R_3R_4 -]_m - C\ R_5R_6 - OH \qquad (I)$$

in which
Ar is phenyl, alkyl-substituted phenyl, naphthyl, alkyl-substituted naphthyl
R_1 to R_6 is H, OH or alkyl
n and m is 0 or 1
ii) incubation
iii) isolating the crystals by known methods.

By incubation is meant all different types of crystallisation processes known for a person skilled in the art.
In laboratory scale the hanging drop method is preferred, but in an industrial scale the easiest way is by letting the solution stand.
The compound is preferably chosen among benzylalcohol, 2-methylbenzylalcohol, 1-(1-naphthyl)ethanol, phenylethanol, 1-phenyl-1-propanol, 2-phenyl-2-propanol, 3-phenyl-1-propanol.

The invention is also related to the use of a chemical compound with the general formula (I) for the preparation of crystals of GH from a buffert solution.

When benzyl alcohol is used the preferred amount is at least 1 %. The buffer could e.g. be citrate in a concentration of 2 to 50 mM, preferably 5 to 20 mM and especially 5 mM or 10 mM. The buffer can also be a mixture of sodium citrate and sodium phosphates. The aqueous solution could comprise glycine, lysine, mannitol, and/or glycerol.
An initial pH of 5.8 to 6.3 and preferably 6.2 has given good results. The formation of crystals is depending on time, pH and temperature. At a temperature of between 20°C and 30 °C the crystals are normally rapidly formed, sometimes instantly and mostly within an hour.

Also claimed are crystals of growth hormone or any functional analogue thereof in the form of needles, trigonal forms, cubes or parallelepipeds with a length of at least 20 micron. In some cases the obtained crystals were even more than 1 mm. Preferably the length is at least 50 to 2000 micron and more preferably 100 to 300 micron. The claimed crystals are thus bigger than the crystals earlier obtained.
The claimed crystals can be useful in human and veterinary usage for various administration form, e.g. topical, nasal, pulmonal, oral, rectal and parenteral.
Suspension for injection, depot formulation and dry formulation comprising crystals according to the invention are claimed.
The invention is also related to a method for treatment of a patient in need of growth hormone or any functional analogue thereof by administering the claimed formulation as well as for use of GH crystals for the manufacturing of a medicament for treatment of a patient in need of growth hormone or any functional analogue thereof.

The claimed process can be used in a purification process for GH.

Our claimed crystals have been shown to be biologically active.

Growth hormone can be both human and animal such as human growth hormone (hGH), bovine growth hormone (bGH), fish and porcine growth hormone (pGH).

By growth hormone (GH) is meant both naturally occurring and recombinant GH (rGH). By functional analogues are meant compounds having the same therapeutic effect as the growth hormone in the animal. Preferred is the recombinant hGH. (rhGH)

By using crystals of GH the formulation is not dependent on its solubility in the used carrier/buffer which gives a limitation to the amount of GH per volume. This is a clear advantage of the claimed crystals.
In a dry composition, a suspension or a depot formulation the amount per volume of GH in the drug delivery system could be very high.

Formed crystals are shown in
Figure 1: Microscopy of formed crystals

EXAMPLES 1-20

Material for formulation studies was the drug substance in the ordinary Genotropin® process. The eluate obtained after the purification process contains approx. 36 IU/ml.

Formulation was performed in laboratory scale by gel filtration which serves the purposes of removing salts used in the previous purification steps and adding the constituents of the final formulation. The column Sephadex G-25 (Pharmacia) was equilibrated with the formulation buffer. The chromatography was performed at +7°C.

The desired protein concentration was achieved by diluting with the formulation buffer. The solution was sterile filtered and dispensed in glass cartridges.

The formation of needles in different solutions was followed in examples 1-20 and 22. The obtained hGH crystals were characterised.

METHODS

Isolation

The crystals were centrifuged and the supernatant was taken away with a pipette. The residue was washed and centrifuged 6 times with water, thereafter 3 times with acetonitrile and finally twice with diethylether. The crystals were dried.

Polypeptides size distribution (SDS-PAGE)

Proteins in preparations of somatropin, hGH, were denatured by sodium dodecyl sulphate (SDS) to yield negatively charged molecular complexes of SDS-protein. Separation was then obtained according to molecular size by electrophoresis in polyacrylamide gels (PAGE) in the presence of SDS. The relative polypeptide size distribution of hGH was quantified by densitometric scanning of the silver stained polypeptide bands.

Thin layer chromatography (TLC)

Thin layer chromatography was performed on silica gel plates (Merck wt 5715) and developed in n-butanol: acetic acid : water : ethylacetate, 1:1:1:1.

Evaluation was based on three different visualization techniques, comprising UV-light at 254 nm for general screening, ninhydrin reaction for primary amino groups and potassium permanganate reagents.

ELISA, Immunosorbent assay

Microtiter plates (Nunc a/s, Denmark) coated with immunosorbent purified rabbit antibodies directed against hGH were incubated with serum samples, references (standards) and control. After washing Fab´anti-hGH-biotin conjugate is added and allowed to bind to the solid phase antigens. Following a further washing step, a Streptavidin-HRP conjugate is added and allowed to bind to the solid phase biotin. The amount of HRP on the solid phase is then determined using the substrates H_2O_2 and 3,3´, 5, 5´,-tetra-methylbenzidine (TMBZ) and perborate. The final oxidized product is measured by its absorbance at 450 nm. The minimum detectable concentration is 0.4 mU/L. At 0.72 mU/L the intra-assay and inter-assay coefficients of variation are 2.3 and 9.0 % respectively, and at 4.07 mU/L the variations are 2.2 and 11 %, respectively.

HPLC

AshaiPac-OD 550, reversed phase / TRIS (pH 8.5) - n-propanol, isocratic.
Detection: 210 and 280 nm.

Gel filtration

Superdex 75/0.05 M phosphate buffer pH 7.4.
Detection: 280 nm.

Visual inspection

The appearance of the solutions were eye-inspected according to Ph. Eur. 2nd Ed.

pH

pH was measured with glass and calomel electrodes.

Examples	1	2	3	4	5	6
hGH IU/ml	20	20	20	20	20	20
Na-citrate, mM	10	10	10	10	-	5
citr+phos*	-	-	-		x	
glycine, mM	12	-	12	-	-	12
lysine, mM	-	-	-	-	-	-
mannitol, mM	150	150	-	-	-	130
glycerol	-	-	150	150	130	
benzyl alc. %	1	1	1	1	1,25	1
Volume, ml	1	1	1	1	1	3.4
Starting values:						
pH	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2-6.3
visual inspect.	clear	clear	clear	clear	clear	clear
The results after 3 weeks ´ storage at 30°C:						
pH	6,3	6,3	-	-	-	6.2
visual inspect.	clear	clear	cryst	cryst	cryst	cryst

Examples	7	8	9	10	11
hGH IU/ml	20	20	20	20	20
Na-citrate, mM	10	10	10	-	-
citr+phos*	-	-	-	x	x
glycine, mM	12	-	-	12	-
mannitol, mM	150	150	-	150	150
glycerol	-	-	150	-	-
benzyl alc. %	1	1	1	1	1
Volume, ml	1	1	1	1	1
Starting values:					
pH	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2
visual inspect.	clear	clear	clear	clear	clear
The results after 3 weeks storage at 30°C:					
pH	6,3	6,3	6.3	6.4	6.3
visual inspect.	cryst	cryst	cryst	cryst	cryst

Examples	12	13	14	15	16
hGH IU/ml	20	20	20	20	20
Na-citrate, mM	-	-	10	10	10
citr+phos*	x	x			
glycine, mM	12	-	-	29	-
lysine	-	-	12	-	29
mannitol, mM	-	-	130	130	130
glycerol	150	150	-	-	-
benzyl alc. %	1	1	1.5	1.5	1.5
Volume, ml	1	1	1	1	1
Starting values:					
pH	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.1
visual inspect.	clear	clear	op**	op**	op**
The results after 3 weeks ´ storage at 30°C:					
pH	6,3	6,3			
visual inspect.	cryst	cryst			
The result after 3 months´storage at 5°C					
pH			6.3	6.3	6.3
visual inspect.			cryst	cryst	cryst

* x means a mixture of 1.7 mM Na citrate and 6.7 mM Na phosphate buffer system.

** means opalescent

Examples	17	18	19	20
hGH IU/ml	20	4	20	20
Na-citrate, mM	-	10	5	-
citr+phos*	x	-	-	x
glycine, mM	12	12	12	12
mannitol, mM	250	250	250	250
benzyl alc. %	-	-	-	-
Volume, ml	1	3	1	1
Starting values:				
pH	6.3	6.3	6.1	6.3
visual inspect.	clear	clear	clear	clear
The results after 3 weeks ´ storage at 30°C:				
pH	6,4	6,2	6.2	6.4
visual inspect.	clear	clear	clear	clear
The result after 3 months´storage at 5°C				
pH			6.3	6.3
visual inspect.			clear	clear

* x means a mixture of 1.7 mM Na citrate and 6.7 mM Na phosphate buffer system.

DISCUSSION

Normally our formulations comprising benzylalcohol gave crystals in the pH range of 6.1 to 6.3 and the solutions without benzylalcohol gave no crystals within this pH range. Formulations 1 and 2 were clear in spite of the addition of benzyl alcohol at pH 6.3 which appears to be a critical value for the formation of crystals in benzylalcohol.

RESULTS AND IDENTIFICATION

Microscopy

The crystals were in the form of needles of different length. The biggest were about 0.3 x 0,03 mm. See fig 1.

Melting point determination.

The melting point was performed on a Leitz-Wetzlar microscope. No melting point could be observed. The crystals were intact up to 230°C, when they started to be miscoloured. At about 290°C the crystals were black but not melted. (pyrolysis)

Solubility.

The crystals were insoluble in organic solvents such as dichloromethane, acetonitrile, ethanol, dimethyl formamide, diethylether. They were difficult to dissolve in water and 70 % ethanol in water but soluble in acids such as 1 % acetic acid, 6 M HCl and in a base such as 0.1 M phosphate buffer, pH 8.

Thin layer chromatography (TLC)

The crystals, dissolved in 10 % acetic acid and the buffer components, i.e. citric acid, mannitol, glycine and benzylic alcohol were investigated.

The crystal sample did not migrate in this system, whereas all buffer components did.

The crystal sample absorbed UV-light and showed positive reaction with ninhydrin and permanganate reagents, indicating the presence of aromatic groups, amino groups and oxidizable groups.

Hydrolysis.

Hydrolysis in 6M HCl, 110°C, 20 hours of the crystal sample and hGH reference. Analysis by using TLC showed identical spots.

HPLC, Gel filtration, SDS-Page, IEF
The crystal sample was almost identical with the hGH reference.

Amino acid analysis
Experimental data obtained on the crystals was in good agreement with the theoretical value as well as with the hGH reference sample. See table below:

Component	Theoretical value	crystals
Asp	20	19.9
Thr	10	9.7
Ser	18	17.8
Glu	27	26.8
Pro	8	8.2
Gly	8	8.2
Ala	7	7.0
Half-cys	4	3.2
Val	7	7.2
Met	3	3.0
Ile	8	8.2
Leu	26	26.2
Tyr	8	8.2
Phe	13	13.0
His	3	3.1
Lys	9	9.3
Trp	1	*
Arg	11	11.1

* Not determined

The protein content of the crystal sample, based on an amount of 0.22 mg, was 84 %. The content in the reference material (0.45 mg) was 91 %.

EXAMPLE 21

No crystals were formed in a solution containing:

20 IU/ml hGH
5 mM Na-citrate,
12 mM glycine
250 mM mannitol and
1 % benzyl alcohol
at a pH of 6.4.

With the addition of more benzyl alcohol (i.e. > 1 %) the crystals were however rapidly formed.
Crystals were also produced by lowering pH closer to 6 or under 6.

The morphology of the crystals could be varied by pH and growth rate. When pH is closer to 6.3 the crystals are like needles and parallelepipeds.
Within 24 hours crystals are formed with a length of 0.1 to 0.3 mm and about 0.001 to 0.005 mm thick.
By varying the pH the size of the crystals could thus be changed.

Smaller crystals are formed within a shorter time.

EXAMPLE 22

Other chemical compounds were investigated for the possibility of forming crystals of growth hormone.

Material for formulation studies was the drug substance in the ordinary Genotropin® process. The eluate obtained after the purification process contains approx. 36 IU/ml before formulation.

Formulation was performed in laboratory scale by dialysis against the used buffer.

The method "hanging drop" was used for investigation of useful agents for crystallisation of growth hormone.
The "hanging drop" method is described in Crystallisation of Nucleic Acids and Proteins, A practical approach, by A Ducruix and R Giegé, IRL Press at Oxford, 1991, pages 82-86.
The initial volume of the drop was 5µl+5µl and the well volume 1 ml.
The buffer used during the experiments comprised the following ingredients:

Compound as given below
200 mM Na-citrate
pH 6.2

The results were the following with the different crystallisations agents:

Compound	Crystals
benzylalcohol	large single
±1-(1-naphthyl)ethanol	large single
(±)phenylethanol	large single
+phenylethanol	large single
-phenylethanol	large single
1-phenyl-1-propanol	large single
(±)1-phenyl--propanol	large single
2-phenyl-2-propanol	large single
3-phenyl-1-propanol	large single
2-methylbenzylalcohol	single

For some of the used crystallisation agents the crystals were formed more slower. When using ±1-(1-naphthyl)ethanol the crystals were formed after a couple of weeks, and the size was 200 to 500 microns. Instead of using Na-citrate, also MES-buffer was used. The results were the same as when using Na-citrate.
A higher concentration of the crystallisation agent was, however, needed when no citrate was present.

When other crystallisation agents were tested in the same way as above, falling outside the general formula (I), no crystals were formed.:

Compound	Crystals
3-methyl-4-nitrobenzylalcohol	none
2-nitrobenzylalcohol	none
4-nitrobenzylalcohol	none
1-naphthol	none
2-naphthol	none
phenol	none
benzaldehyd	none
benzylamine	none
(-)1-phenyl-1-butanol	none
L-phenylglycinol	none

EXAMPLE 23

Immunological analysis of the crystals was performed. The crystals were formed according to examples 1-20 in a buffer containing:
20 IU / ml growth hormone
5 mmol Na-citrate
12 mmol glycine
130 mmol mannitol
1 % benzylalcohol.

0.17 mg of the formed crystals were dissolved in 0.340 ml 0.05 M phosphate buffered saline, pH 7.5 containing 0.05 % Tween 20. The solution was further diluted in 10 fold steps in the same buffer. All individual dilution steps were analysed in quadruplicates.

An enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay, ELISA, Immunosorbent assay, was used to measure rhGH in the dissolved crystals.

The amount of rhGH in the vial was found to be 0.15 mg.

EXAMPLE 24. Bioassay

Crystals have been grown from a solution according to example 6 above and dispensed as 0.5 ml samples in glass containers. After preparation the solution was stored at 25°C for 1 week for the crystals to grow. They were stored further at 5°C for 3 months prior to crystal harvesting. When the crystals were harvested the supernatant surrounding the crystals was sucked of. The crystals were rinsed twice with 0.25 ml of buffer according to example 6 (i e the composition according to example 6 except for the growth hormone). The second rinsing step was terminated by centrifugation of the crystals prior to discarding the rinsing buffer. The remaining crystals were dissolved in 0.5 ml of buffer of 5 mM sodium citrate, 12 mM glycine and 130 mM mannitol, pH 6.1. Several samples were pooled to be used in the bioassay analysis.

Gel filtration chromatography was run on a sample prepared according to the above procedure. The growth hormone showed to be 100% monomeric after crysallisation and subsequent dissolution.

Bioassay of dissolved Growth Hormone (GH) crystals:

To investigate whether the GH crystals obtained were biologically active a weight gain assay in hypophysectomized rats was performed.

Rats were purchased from Möllegaard A/S, Denmark. The rats were hypophysectomized the week before arrival and therefore lacking endogenous growth hormone and other pituitary hormones, resulting in stunted growth. The rats were weighed at arrival in the lab and before assay. Rats changing weight <10% were accepted to enter the study.

The rats were then divided randomly into groups of 15. They were treated twice daily for 4 days with either an in-house standard preparation of human recombinant GH (calibrated

against WHO 80/505 to have a biological potency of 4.5 IU/vial) or the solution made from GH crystal at two doses. Standard doses were 0.04 IU/day and 0.16 IU/ml.

The groups were weighed before the first injection (day 1) and approximately 16 hours after the last injection (day 5) . The difference between these weights were calculated and the potency determined by comparing the results of the crystal solution treated animals with those of the standard treated groups.

The results are shown below (weight gain, g SD):

Dose	0.04 IU/day	0.16 IU/day
Standard	12.2 8.9	17.7 8.7
GH crystals	17.3 8.0	21.3 1.7

The biological potency of the dissolved GH crystals was found to be 7.1 IU/ml.

Thus, we have demonstrated that the human growth hormone in dissolved GH crystals is biologically active in vivo.

CLAIMS

1. Process for manufacturing crystals of growth hormone (GH) or functional derivatives thereof characterised by the steps:
i) mixing GH or functional derivatives thereof with an aqueous solution comprising a buffer and a chemical compound with the general formula (I):

$$Ar - [- CR_1R_2 -]_n - [- C R_3R_4 -]_m - C R_5R_6 - OH \qquad (I)$$

in which
Ar is phenyl, alkyl-substituted phenyl, naphthyl, alkyl-substituted naphthyl
R_1 to R_6 is H, OH or alkyl
n and m is 0 or 1
ii) incubating
iii) isolating the crystals by known methods.

2. Process according to claim 1, in which GH is human GH.

3. Process according to claim 2, in which GH is recombinant human GH (rhGH).

4. Process according to any of claims 1-3 in which the compound is chosen among benzylalcohol, 2-methylbenzylalcohol, 1-(1-naphthyl)ethanol, phenylethanol, 1-phenyl-1-propanol, 2-phenyl-2-propanol, 3-phenyl-1-propanol.

5. Process according to claim 4 in which the compound is benzyl alcohol.

6. Process according to claim 5 in which the amount of benzyl alcohol is at least 1 %.

7. Use of a chemical compound with the general formula (I):

$$Ar - [- CR_1R_2 -]_n - [- C\ R_3R_4 -]_m - C\ R_5R_6 - OH \qquad (I)$$

in which
Ar is phenyl, alkyl-substituted phenyl, naphthyl, alkyl-substituted naphthyl
R_1 to R_6 is H, OH or alkyl
n and m is 0 or 1
in the preparation of crystals of GH from a buffert solution.

8. Crystals of growth hormone or any functional analogue thereof in the form of needles, trigonal forms, cubes or parallelepipeds with a length of at least 20 microns.

9. Crystals according to claim 7, in which GH is human GH.

10. Crystals according to claim 8, in which GH is recombinant human GH (rhGH).

11. Crystals according to claim 8 in which the needles have a length of at least 50, preferably 50 - to 2000 and more preferably 100 to 300 microns.

12. Crystals which have been prepared according to the process in any of the claims 1-6.

13. Suspension for injection comprising crystals according to any of claims 8-12.

14. Depot formulation comprising crystals according to any of claims 8-12.

15. Dry formulation comprising crystals according to any of claims 8-12.

16. Method for treatment of a patient in need of growth hormone or any functional analogue thereof by administering the claimed formulation.

17. Use of GH crystals according to any of claims 8-12 for the manufacturing of a medicament for treatment of a patient in need of growth hormone or any functional analogue thereof.

18. Process for the purification of GH characterized by the crystallizing process according to claim 1.

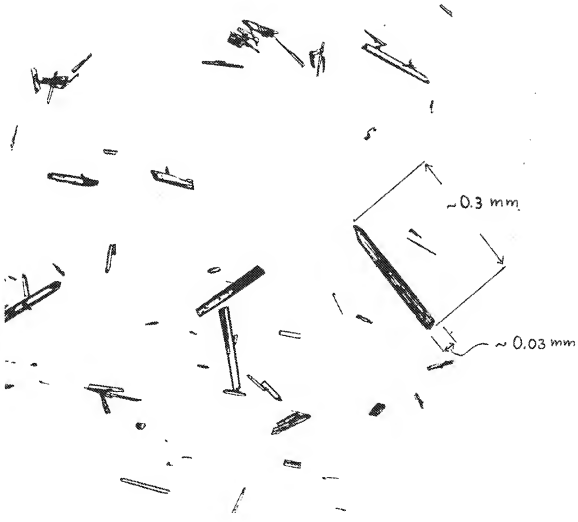

Figure 1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/SE 93/00885

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC5: C07K 3/24, C07K 15/06, A61K 37/36
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC5: C07K, A61K

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

SE,DK,FI,NO classes as above

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

MEDLINE, WPI, CLAIMS

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO, A1, 9200998 (NOVO NORDISK A/S), 23 January 1992 (23.01.92) --	1-15,17-18
X	BIO/TECHNOLOGY, Volume 5, May 1987, Noel D. Jones et al, "Crystallization of authentic recombinant human growth hormone" page 499 - page 500 --	1-15,17-18
A	WO, A1, 9201463 (SMITHKLINE BEECHAM CORPORATION), 6 February 1992 (06.02.92), abstract --	1-15,17-18

[X] Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. [X] See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
"B" erlier document but published on or after the international filing date
"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"X" document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"Y" document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report
27 January 1994	02 -02- 1994
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ Swedish Patent Office Box 5055, S-102 42 STOCKHOLM Facsimile No. + 46 8 666 02 86	Authorized officer Jonny Brun Telephone No. + 46 8 782 25 00

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (July 1992)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/SE 93/00885

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	Dialog Information Services, file 154, Medline, Dialog accession no. 07133706, Medline accession no. 90040706, Clarkson J. et al: "Crystallization and X-ray data collection on human growth hormone", & J Mol Biol Aug 20 1989, 208 (4) p 719-21	1-15,17-18

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/SE 93/00885

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. [X] Claims Nos.: 16
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

See PCT rule 39.1(iv): Method for treatment of the human or animal body by surgery or therapy, as well as diagnostic methods.

2. [ ] Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:

3. [ ] Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. [ ] As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.

2. [ ] As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.

3. [ ] As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. [ ] No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest
[ ] The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
[ ] No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

30/12/93

International application No.
PCT/SE 93/00885

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
WO-A1- 9200998	23/01/92	AU-A- 8284691	04/02/92
		CA-A- 2086087	14/01/92
		EP-A- 0540582	12/05/93
WO-A1- 9201463	06/02/92	AU-A- 8401891	18/02/92
		US-A- 5015627	14/05/91